HANDBOOK OF HINDU RELIGIO



TIRUMALAI - TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

HANDBOOK OF HINDU RELIGION



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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED
BY
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Executive Officer
UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
TIRUMALAI-TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS, TIRUPATI.

PREFACE

—:o:—

The Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Committee, intending to publish a Handbook of Hindu Religion for the benefit of the public and the students of the Summer School of Hindu Religion, appointed a Committee to take steps for the preparation of the book. The Committee approved the synopsis of the book prepared by the Director of the Oriental Institute and appointed a sub-committee consisting of Profs. P. N. Srinivasachari, P. V. Ramanujasvami and K. C. Varadachari to draft the Handbook. The present book is the result of the combined labours of the three scholars named above. The Committee will consider its effort amply rewarded if the Handbook serves to inculcate the main tenets of our religion upon the minds of the readers.

గీ॥ నాననేందుసుధాధార లనఁగఁ దార
హారవల్లులు నురమున నలరుచుండఁ
జారుమకుటాభిశోభియు శంఖచక్ర
హృద్యపార్శ్వుండు మా వెంకటేశ్వరుండు.

పరమయోగివిలాసము—సిద్ధిరాజు తిమ్మరాజు.

చ॥ ఇతఁ డలమేలుమంగవిభుఁ, డీతఁడెపో కలశాబ్ధికన్యకున్
సతతముఁ జిత్త మిచ్చిన రసజ్ఞుఁడు, ప్రాజ్ఞుఁడు సర్వవైభవో
న్నతుఁడు రమాసతీప్రియుఁడు నందకశార్ఙ్గధరుం డటంచు ని
న్నతివలు మెచ్చి మెచ్చి కొనియాడుదు రెప్పుడు వేంకటేశ్వరా!

శ్రీవేంకటేశ్వర శతకము—తాళ్లపాక అన్నమాచార్యులు

ఉ॥ యోగ్యతలేని కష్టుఁడ నయోగ్యుఁడ నన్నిటఁ జూడ గర్భని
ర్భాగ్యుఁడ నీకృపామతికిఁ బ్రాప్తుఁడ నోయలమేలుమంగ నీ
చూచుకృపానిరీక్షణమె చూచెదనంచును నీప్రియాంగనన్
బూచినవాక్ప్రసూనములఁ బూజలు చేసెద వేంకటేశ్వరా!

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సీ॥ సర్వేశ! సర్వాత్మ! సర్వగుణాతీత!
సర్వజనావన! సదయహృదయ!
గోపాల! గోపాలగోపనధౌరేయ!
గో గోప గోపికా భాగధేయ!

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గీ॥ దేవుఁడ నటన్న నూఱక తీఱు నెట్లు
చెల్లెఁబో నీకు నొకనికిఁ జెల్లుఁగాక
తండ్రి వీ వలమేల్మంగ తల్లి మాకు
జలజహితధామ వెంకటశైలధామ.

ప్రబంధరాజవిజయ వేంకటేశ్వరవిలాసము — గణవరపు వేంకటకవి.

సీ॥ అఖిలవిశ్వమున కేకాధార మర్చావ
తారమ్మె తా నౌట తథ్య మగును,
అఖిలమై యాదిమధ్యాంతముల్ లోఁగొన్న
నిత్యంబు తా నౌట సత్యమగును,
అఖిలపూర్ణము సచ్చిదానందమయము నా
రాయణార్థకము తా నగుట నిజము,
అఖిలజీవుల కాయురారోగ్యభాగ్యప్ర
దాత తా నౌట యథార్థ మగును,
గీ॥ అఖిల మయి పొల్చు తనకల్మి నరయ నఖిల;
మఖిలము ఖిలమ్మె తనకల్మి నరయకున్న;
నెవ్వఁ డవ్వాఁడ వీవె రావే, భయార్తు
నాదుకోవె! వేంకటనాథ! చేదుకోవె!

శ్రీ వేటూరి ప్రభాకరశాస్త్రి.

క॥ మంగళ మలమేల్మంగకు
మంగళ మలమేలుమంగమగనికి నని మీ
మంగళ మేమఱ మెద సమ
రాంగణనిస్సీమ! వేంకటాచలధామా!

వేంకటాచలధామతారావళి — ధర్మపురి వెంకటశాస్త్రి.

ஸ்ரீமதே ராமாநுஜாய நம:

ஸ்ரீ வேங்கடேஶ்வர ஸ்தோத்ரங்கள்

காப்பு.

பல்லாண்டு பல்லாண்டு பல்லாயிரத் தாண்டு
பலகோடி நூறாயிரம்
மல்லாண்ட திண்தோள் மணிவண்ணா! உன்
சேவடி செவ்வி திருக்காப்பு.

உளன்கண்டாய் நன்னெஞ்சே! உத்தம னென்றும்
உளன்கண்டாய் உள்ளுவா ருள்ளத்து—உளன்கண்டாய்
வெள்ளத்தி னுள்ளானும் வேங்கடத்து மேயானும்
உள்ளத்தி னுள்ளானென் றோர்.

பொய்கையாழ்வார்.

போதறிந்து வானரங்கள் பூஞ்சுனைபுக்கு ஆங்கலர்ந்த
போதரிந்து கொண்டேத்தும் போதுஉள்ளம்! —போது
மணிவேங்கடவன் மலரடிக்கே செல்ல
அணிவேங் கடவன்பே ராய்ந்து.

பூதத்தாழ்வார்.

தாழ்சடையும் நீள்முடியும் ஒள்மழுவும் சக்கரமும்
சூழரவும் பொன்னாணும் தோன்றுமால்—சூழும்
திரண்டருவி பாயும் திருமலைமே லெந்தைக்கு
இரண்டுருவு மொன்றாய் இசைந்து.

பேயாழ்வார்.

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A Hand-book of Hindu Religion

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Hinduism is one of the most important of living religions in the world; it is the oldest of all and is called *Sanātana Dharma*. No study of religion can be complete without taking its finest and highest forms as revealed in its sacred scriptures and as interpreted by its leading exponents and realised by its seers, sages and saints. Hinduism in a sense supplies the fullest material for the study of religion and can claim to be the one religion which is most comprehensive and universal.

It is not an historical religion, but it is a religion without any historic founders and it has eternal foundation. Historical religions base their doctrines and dogmas on the revelations of their prophets. Hinduism is based on the *Vedas*, the eternal scriptures revealed to the seers and sages and testified to by the *Smṛtis* and transmitted in an unbroken tradition. The *Veda* is the word of God and is God Himself and is therefore eternal or *nitya*. It is *apauruṣeya*, impersonal, not man-

made. Hinduism is *sanātana* religion without beginning and end and is one continuous revelation consisting of the *Veda*, *Vedāṅgas*, *Smṛtis*, *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas*, *Āgamas*, the hymns of the *Āḻvārs* and the *Nāyanmārs*. It deals with eternal spiritual truths adopted to changing conditions and is therefore fixed in essentials and flexible in non-essentials like rites and rituals.

The term Hinduism is of foreign origin and vague. The term *Sanātana Dharma* is therefore preferable to it and it has a rounded perfection and is comprehensive; but the name Hinduism is sanctioned by usage. *Dharma* applies to righteousness exemplified in practical life, individual and social, and implies also *mokṣa-dharma* or the nature of freedom from the ills of life or *saṁsāra*. It is thus a way of life and a view of life and includes both theory and practice. The *Veda* is the chief authority or *pramāṇa* for Hinduism, and as aids to its practical understanding are the other scriptures like the *Smṛtis*. There are four *Vedas*, the *Ṛg-veda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda*. Each *Veda* has three divisions, namely the *Mantra*, the *Brāhmaṇa* and the *Upaniṣad*. One who knows the inner meaning of the *Mantras* and the *Brāhmaṇas* is a *Mantra-dṛś*, who acquires mastery over nature, internal and external. It

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is the essence of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Sūtras* expound their philosophy.

The term *darśana* brings out the comprehensiveness of the *Sanātana Dharma* or Vedānta. *Darśana* ordinarily applies to knowledge gained through the senses or *pratyakṣa* as in the example, "This rose is red." It is real and not illusory though it is particular and fleeting. The knowledge gained through reason or *anumāna* is more stable as it gives us some insight into the universal laws which explain the particular facts given in sense-perception. It is thus *darśana* in the sense of reasoning, as in the example, "The earth goes round the sun, because it is a planet." Higher than inference is intuition or direct knowledge of God or Brahman, as in the experience of mystics like Nammāḷvār. It is *Brahma-darśana* and is the supreme end of knowledge. Thus *darśana* is going from the physical sense organ to the inner eye of reason and finally to *Brahma-cakṣus* or the direct realisation of Brahman. In this way knowledge leads to the more of itself; it grows from sense-perception or *pratyakṣa* to reasoning or *anumāna*. Reasoning develops into direct realisation of Brahman as given in *Śāstra*. All these three ways are interconnected and complementary and there is no contradiction in their relation. *Veda* is not blind

faith as it is a spiritual verity verified by the *Ṛṣis* and other seers of God. The best test of Vedic knowledge is in our direct intuition of God with the guidance of the *Guru* who has seen Him face to face. In this way *darśana* as sense-knowledge becomes *darśana* or seeing with the inner eye of reason and finally as direct *Brahma-darśana* or experience of God by the *Ṛṣis* and other seers of God. Thus the term *darśana* applied to Hinduism is all-inclusive. It accepts the reality of matter or the world of nature as described by science, but rejects materialism as the final view of life. It accepts the importance of reason but rejects rationalism as the final view of life. It accepts the importance of scripture or *śāstra* but rejects theology as blind faith. Hinduism gives a place to science, philosophy, and theology and reconciles them. It says that the best proof of the existence of God is the experience of God.

Hinduism is not a personal religion as it insists on the unity of life as a whole and the duties of each person to the other members of the society. But it does not accept the western view that God needs man's co-operation in the furtherance of His purpose. Man does his work as worship of God in the spirit of *kaiṅkarya* in utter humility. Every act of social service is really the adoration of God as the inner self in

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CHAPTER II

GOD

God in Hinduism is called by various names, like *Brahman*, *Īśvara*, *Bhagavān* and *Puruṣottama* and they all refer to the same Being. But many misleading views are held about His nature and qualities and they have to be corrected before the true meaning is explained. The most prevalent mistake is to say that the Hindu makes God in his own image; he worships stones, trees, animals and departed spirits and at best God is man as an excellent person. This view is absurd as it is not Nature but the God in Nature that is adored by him. Man is made in God's image and not God in man's image. It is wrong to say that the Hindu is a polytheist who worships many Gods as Devas. God or *Īśvara* is in all Gods as their inner ruler or *Devadeva* and therefore the Hindu is a monotheist who affirms that Brahman is the one without a second. Another mistake is that Hinduism is pantheistic as it holds that all is God and that God is all. God or *Īśvara* is in all beings as their ruler but is not equated with all beings. He is pure and perfect without any taint or imperfection. Still others say that the Hindu

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Brahman in relation to the world or cosmos is called *Īśvara* and it is He who creates it, sustains it and destroys it. He does the three functions of *sṛṣṭi*, creation, *sthiti*, preservations and *saṁhāra*, destruction in the three forms of Brahma Viṣṇu and Śiva. This threefold function is described in detail in the eighteen *Purāṇas* of which the chief are *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*. The world consists of *Jīvas* and *Prakṛti* but they are eternal and not created out of nothing. Before creation they were in a latent stage in *Pralaya* like the seed before it becomes the tree. In creation they are given new bodies by *Brahman* according to their previous *karma* and they get new opportunities of becoming free and perfect. In the state of *sthiti* they live and move in the three worlds, Earth, *Svarga* and lower world in accordance with their *karma*. They have freedom to make or mar themselves, and Viṣṇu the Lord, sustains them as their very life and He guides justly. Then there comes a time when the world is steeped in wickedness and sin and the Lord Śiva destroys it for the time being. The three functions are done by the same *Īśvara* out of his sweet and loving will and they are aspects of the one cosmic function, namely to redeem the *Jīvas* from their ignorance and evil. This process goes on endlessly in a circle till all the *Jīvas* attain *mukti*.

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very temple of God or *Brahmapuri*. As the seat of *Divinity*, it is held sacred, not defiled as a filthy place of sin. God is love and He is in the *Jīva* in order that the *Jīva* may be made Godly.

Avatāra

The theory of *Brahman* as redeemer is clearly brought out by that *Avatāra* or Divine incarnation as revealed in the two *Itihāsas*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. It is fully revealed by the author of the *Bhagavad-gītā* who is the highest incarnation of God. As the Lord himself says in the *Gītā*, He incarnates into history when virtue or *dharma* declines and is threatened with destruction by *adharma* or vice. He comes down with a unique form of his own to punish the evil-doer and reward the virtuous man and restore the moral order of the world. The real motive of the incarnation is moral and religious as it consists in redeeming even the evil-doer from his ways of wickedness or sin and blessing the devotee or *bhakta* by revealing His form made of love or *kṛpā*. Even punishment or *daṇḍana* is *dayākārya* as its real object is to reform the offender and not repress him. *Avatāra* is not descent from a higher place to a lower place with a physical body. It is spiritual descent into human and even subhuman planes and is due

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fact of the motherhood of God that appeals to mercy and love as the very heart of creation. God as ruler or law giver metes out justice to every one according to the strict rules of *karma* and *dharma*. It provides no hope of mercy for the persons who violate the rules and no man is so pure or sinless as to say that he walks in the ways of righteousness. But God as mother is forgiving and no sin is so sinful as not to merit mercy or *dayā*. Therefore every one seeks the grace of Lakṣmī or Pārvatī or Śakti as the very embodiment of redemptive love. But mercy by itself may encourage favouritism and indulgence and the sinner may exploit the quality of forgiveness. The Hindus therefore worship divinity in the dual form of *Īśvara* and *Īśvarī*. Law is severe and love is indulgent; but in God law and love are wedded together and they are really one though they function as two.

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The *Jīva* is thus different from its quality of *jñāna* or consciousness. The *jñāna* or quality undergoes changes and not the substance or *ātman*. In the *jāgrat* or waking state, the *Jīva* is conscious of the external world, and its five sense organs are active. It sees things with the eyes, hears sounds with the ears, has the sensations of smell, taste and touch through the nose, the tongue and the skin. Therefore sensations are in the *Jīva* and the objects which cause them are in the external world. In the dream state or *svapna*, the *Jīva* does not perceive things but is only mentally active and enjoys pleasure and pain. In deep sleep or *suṣupti*, the *Jīva* is at perfect rest and its consciousness does not work. Though it is not active, it is not non-existent; it is in a latent state.

The *ātman* is by nature self-effulgent, active, joyful and eternal. It is a mode or *aṁśa* of God and though it exists as an eternal entity, it is not separate from Him. It is not born and it does not die. It is beyond the past, the present and the future and is thus beyond time and it is beyond space. The *ātman* is essentially self-conscious and it has the quality of *jñāna* by which it thinks, feels and wills. It is a knowing subject and is not *jaḍa* or inert. It has moral freedom and it is not passive. It is joyful and is

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CHAPTER IV

PRAKRTI

Every religion deals with the nature and function of the three ultimate entities, Nature, Self and God and their relation. But, it is Hinduism that makes the study exact by calling them *acit*, *cit* and *Īśvara* or *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa* and *Puruṣottama* or *pāśa*, *paśu* and *pati* and defining their relative positions. The meaning and value of Nature or *prakṛti* will be just considered. Nature refers to the objects in the world, like houses trees, rivers, seas and mountains. It also includes the sky, the Sun, the Moon and the stars. The scientist is interested in studying the phenomena of nature in all their details. While the Chemist seeks to know the various metals and non-metals that compose the world, the Astronomer enquires into the nature of the heavenly bodies, like the Sun, the Moon and the stars. The Biologist desires to understand the nature and function of the body. While the scientist observes the phenomena of nature and tries to know the general laws underlying them, the religious man seeks to know Nature and distinguish it from the *Jīva* and God. His primary interest is the knowledge of God who is

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travels at the rate of 182,000 miles a second and it takes 3½ years for the light of the nearest star to reach us. From these we know the greatest mystery, and imagination is staggered by the infinity of space. What is true of space is also true of time. While space refers to co-existence of things, time is a succession of events.

The object of studying *prakṛti* or *acit* is to know that our body is made of *prakṛti* and that we are different from it. The body is made of earth, water, fire, air and ether and it has five sense organs, and is called the gross body or *sthūlaśarīra*. There is a subtle body called the *sūkṣmaśarīra* and it consists of *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *ahaṅkāra*. Though in western Psychology they are classed as mind different from the body made of matter, Hinduism treats them as physical changes in a subtle form. *Ahaṅkāra* is *egoity*, *buddhi* is determination, *manas* and *citta* are particular perishing changes in the mind. *Śarīra* is thus subtle and gross and may be called psycho-physical. Nothing is really lost and there is only change from one state to another.

Prakṛti, as Sāṅkhya philosophy says, consists of twenty-four *tattvas*, namely, *mahat (buddhi, citta) ahaṅkāra*, the five *jñānendriyas*, the five *karmendriyas* making the body, and the five

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Philosophy, as we have said, discusses the nature of the three ultimate entities, matter, soul and God and their interrelation. It also treats of another question which is intimately connected with the relation between soul and God, namely, the life after death, the condition of the soul after its separation from the material body, i.e., the nature of *Mukti*. If the soul travels from this world to another the path taken by it also comes under its purview. This leads to the question of rebirth or transmigration and its cause, *karma*. All these and some related topics come under discussion in philosophy and these problems have been solved differently by different seers. In this way different schools of philosophy have arisen in our country, the chief of which are six, called *darśanas*.

The chief authority for the acceptance of the existence of God is the *Veda*, because He cannot be realised by the senses, nor can His existence be inferred from any known facts. There are some schools of philosophy which do not accept the authority of the *Veda* and mainly depend upon perception and inference. As they do not recognise the *Veda*, there can be no place for God in their philosophies. They are the atheistic schools of Cārvākas, Bauddhas and Jainas. They are called *Nāstikas*. We need not consider them here.

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bhaya, *abhaya*, *sthāna*. *viveka*. *ahiṁsā*, *dayā*, etc. They surrender themselves to God and due to *bhakti* recollect and reflect on *Sāstra* and meditate upon His qualities and get rid of ignorance (*ajñāna*) by His grace. They practise *bhaktiyōga* and attain *mukti* by *prapatti* and God's grace when they leave the body. *Mukti* is of two kinds, *kaivalya* and reaching *Īśvara*. *Kaivalya* is the enjoyment of the pleasure of the realization of *ātman*. The other is attaining *Īśvara* in *Parama-pada* and enjoying his *svarūpa* and eternal bliss. *Īśvara* in *Paramapada* has His own form or *rūpa* of divinely beautiful body. He is one with His beloved ones, Śrī, Bhū, and Nīlā who are His concrete *kṛpa*, and with *nityasūris* who are enternally free like Ananta, Garuḍa and Viṣvak-sena, and the freed souls or *muktas*. His chief līlā consists in releasing the other *Jivas* also from *karma* and making them into his likeness.

Viśiṣṭādvaita says that the absolute *Brahman* is the same as Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, or Veṅkaṭeśvara. He incarnates on historic occasions in different forms to redeem mankind. In response to the prayers of this devotees, He incarnates permanently as idols or *arca*, owing to His infinite love. So according to Viśiṣṭā-dvaita, Viṣṇu or Vāsudeva Himself has His home in the temple of Tirumalai. Out of His infinite

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CHAPTER VI

LITERATURE

The *Vedas* form the fundamental basis of our religion. They are the words of *Brahman* and are said to be Brahman itself. These were uttered by great Ṛṣis (Seers). They are the oldest literary specimens of the world. Their language is an ancient form of Sanskrit. The *Vedas* are four in number called the *Ṛgveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda*. Each Veda comprises two parts, called the *Karmabhāga* and the *Tattvabhāga*—the portion that treats of action *(karma)* and the portion that treats of reality *(tattva)*. The conduct to be followed by those who aspire to acquire *puṇya* or virtue is detailed in the former portion and the eternal truths of life are described in the latter portion. *Brahman* is that by knowing which everything is known and so the portion of the *Veda* which treats of *Brahman* is the most important portion. It is called the Vedānta or the *Upaniṣad*. The former portion may again be divided into two parts called the *Mantra* part and the *Brāhmaṇa* part. The *Brāhmaṇa* portion refers to the details of the ritual and indicates the particular mantra to be recited in each ritual

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fact of the motherhood of God that appeals to mercy and love as the very heart of creation. God as ruler or law giver metes out justice to every one according to the strict rules of *karma* and *dharma*. It provides no hope of mercy for the persons who violate the rules and no man is so pure or sinless as to say that he walks in the ways of righteousness. But God as mother is forgiving and no sin is so sinful as not to merit mercy or *dayā*. Therefore every one seeks the grace of Lakṣmī or Pārvatī or Śakti as the very embodiment of redemptive love. But mercy by itself may encourage favouritism and indulgence and the sinner may exploit the quality of forgiveness. The Hindus therefore worship divinity in the dual form of *Īśvara* and *Īśvarī*. Law is severe and love is indulgent; but in God law and love are wedded together and they are really one though they function as two.

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Dharmasūtras that we inherit are not the concluding portions of *Kalpasūtras*. Some Ṛṣis have written complete *Kalpasūtras* while others wrote only particular portions. To the former class belong the *Dharmasūtras* of Āpastamba, Hiraṇyakeśin, Bodhāyana and Vaikhānasa. The *Dharmasūtras* of Gautama and Vasiṣṭha are independent works and no *Kalpasūtras* by the same authors are available.

The traditonal number of *Smṛtis* or law books is eighteen. They are (1) *Manusmṛti*, (2) *Parāśarasmṛti*, (3) *Vasiṣṭhasmṛti*, (4) *Śaṅkhasmṛti*, (5) *Likhitasmṛti*, (6) *Atrismṛti*, (7) *Viṣṇusmṛti*, (8) *Hārītasmṛti*, (9) *Yamasmṛti*, (10) *Aṅgirassmṛti*, (11) *Uśanassmṛti*, (12) *Saṁvartasmṛti*, (13) *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, (14) *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, (15) *Dakṣasmṛti*, (16) *Vyāsasmṛti*, (17) *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* and (18) *Śātātapasmṛti*. All these *Smṛtis* are equally authoritative but the *Manusmṛti* has commanded universal respect from the authors of all other *Smṛtis* and authors of the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* because it is the most comprehensive and the most elucidative or clear. The *Parāśarasmṛti* is considered to be the standard work for this *Kali* age. It enumerates exhaustively the special rules for the *Kali* age. It is said in the *Manusmṛti* itself that Manu's laws apply to the *Kṛtayuga*, Gautama's laws to

the *Tretāyuga*, the laws of Śaṅkha and Likhita to the *Dvāparayuga* and those of Parāśara to the *Kaliyuga*.

There are some other works which are written by the Ṛṣis like the *Dharmaśāstras* and which are considered as equally authoritative although they do not strictly come under the category of *Dharmaśāstra*. These are *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas*, *Āgamas* and *Tantras*. The *Itihāsas* describe how the duties taught in our *Smṛtis* are discharged by different individuals, how men should act when there is apparent conflict of duties, and thereby create in the minds of people a desire to follow *dharma* and to shun *adharma*. The *Purāṇas* describe how the incarnations like those of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa come down to the level of man in order to elevate men to the divine level and reveal to us the mightly power of God by describing the course of creation and destruction and the right and wrong manner of governing the people. The *Āgamas* contain rules for the construction of temples and shaping of *arcas* and the consecration and worship of the latter. The method of pleasing the Gods in an easy manner and thereby attaining advantages in this and the next world of *svarga* and finally *mokṣa* by following the Yoga is described in the *Tantras*.

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fact of the motherhood of God that appeals to mercy and love as the very heart of creation. God as ruler or law giver metes out justice to every one according to the strict rules of *karma* and *dharma*. It provides no hope of mercy for the persons who violate the rules and no man is so pure or sinless as to say that he walks in the ways of righteousness. But God as mother is forgiving and no sin is so sinful as not to merit mercy or *dayā*. Therefore every one seeks the grace of Lakṣmī or Pārvatī or Śakti as the very embodiment of redemptive love. But mercy by itself may encourage favouritism and indulgence and the sinner may exploit the quality of forgiveness. The Hindus therefore worship divinity in the dual form of *Īśvara* and *Īśvarī*. Law is severe and love is indulgent; but in God law and love are wedded together and they are really one though they function as two.

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too the glory of the *arcāvatāra* of Śiva is mainly described. The Tamil hymns are designed to inspire feelings of veneration and love towards God besides presenting valuable truths. The devotional songs of Tāyumānavar and Paṭṭinattār addressed to Śiva are as popular amongst the Śaivites as the psalms of the Nāyanmārs.

Śaivism is embodied in the philosophic system known as Śaiva Siddhānta and Śaiva Siddhānta is therefore called the philosophy of Śaivism and it is traced to the *Upaniṣads* like Vaiṣṇava Siddhānta. It is chiefly contained in *Śivajñānabodham* by Maikaṇḍan Śivajñānasiddhiyār.

There is a large body of similar religious hymns in the Sanskrit language also. These constitute the stotra literature. They are small hymns consisting of from one to 100 stanzas in praise of a deity, describing the devotee's absolute surrender to God, admitting his sinful nature and his utter helplessness to attain *mukti* unless the Deity out of His natural and immense mercy pities his condition and redeems him from his career of sins. They reveal the *bhakti* or devotion of the devotee and his earnest desire for union with God. The number of these devotional hymns is very large and only a few important and early ones can be mentioned here to serve as examples. The stotras by Śaṅkarācārya are

significant as they are composed by a philosopher who held that *Brahman* was formless and attributeless. The *Stotraratna* of Yāmunācārya comprises 65 stanzas and embodies high philosophical truths. The *Gadyatraya* of Rāmānuja is an equally important triplex. In the first he seeks the mercy and protection *(Śaraṇāgati)* of God. In the second he prays to Śrīraṅganātha of Śrīraṅgam. In the third he prays to God to accept himself. The *Mukundamāla* of Kulaśekhara Āḻvār is another famous hymn of forty stanzas. The importance of *bhakti* or devotion and the mercy of God are clearly brought out in this hymn. *Śrīguṇaratnakośa* is another important hymn of 61 stanzas. Then there are poems praising several *arcāvatāras*, like, *Śrīraṅgarājastava*, *Śrī Varadarājastava*, etc. The *Nāmāvalis* may also be mentioned here as they help us to meditate upon God by repeating His various names.

The devotional songs of Tyāgarāja in praise of Rāma deserve special mention. The songs of Annamācāryulu on Sri Veṅkateśvara are full of high devotional fervour.

CHAPTER VII

VARNAS AND ASRAMAS

Although our religion and philosophy consider *mokṣa* (beatitude) as the primary object of our desire, still they recognise three other objects which are to be attained consistent with the primary one. They are *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*. These three are collectively known as *Trivarga* and along with *mokṣa*, as the *catur-varga*. These are not only ends in themselves but are also means to the principal object, *mokṣa*. *Dharma* is the practical method by which *mokṣa* can be attained. It regulates the conduct of a person who aims at *mokṣa*. It may be called a code of Ethics. The underlying principle in our code of Ethics is that one should prefer what is good or meritorious *(śreyas)* to what is pleasant or pleasurable *(preyas)*. The man who prefers the latter is called ignorant while the man who prefers the former is called wise. The wise man knows that the pleasures of the world are transitory and perishing and that everlasting pleasure is only *mokṣa*. Even the joys of *svarga* and *Brahmaloka* which are gained by sacrifices and *tapas* are only transitory. So if a man has to attain everlasting joy, he must control his senses

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people who do not follow the *dharma* of their class and state in society.

It is not possible to mention all the *varṇa-dharmas* and *āśrama-dharmas* here but a few important ones will be noticed. It is the duty of the Brahman to study and teach the *Veda*, to perform sacrifices for himself and for others, and to give and receive gifts. The first in each pair of duties enumerated above is also prescribed for the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya. The special duty of a Kṣatriya is to protect the people and their *dharma*. Agriculture, cattle rearing and trade are assigned to the Vaiśya. The only duty assigned to the Śūdra is to help the other castes in carrying on their duties. In this way, the *varṇas* specialise in religion, politics, economics and labour according to their station in life, whatever its nature.

In addition to the above social duties, certain religious duties are enjoined, most of which are common to all the castes. These are comprehensively known as the *saṁskāras*. They are *Garbhādhāna* or ceremony for conception; *Puṁsavana* or ceremony of wishing a male child; *Sīmantonnayana* or ceremonial parting of the hair; *Jātakarma* or birth rites; *Nāmakaraṇa* or naming; *Annaprāśana* or giving solid food to the child; *Caula* or tonsure; *Upanayana* or

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Āstikya. 16. *Tapas* is physical exercise to make the body fit for religious duties. 17. *Sthairya* is the will to do one's duty. 18. *Vairāgya* is the renunciation of sense inclinations. The practise of these good qualities is given preference over the above-named *saṁskāras*. Even though a man undergoes all the above *saṁskāras*, it is of no avail if he does not possess these qualities; if, on the other hand, a man possesses these qualities, it does not matter even if he does not undergo all the *saṁskāras*.

Hinduism not only insists on the practice of these virtues but also on the avoidance of vices of which the chief are given below. 1. *Kāma* is the desire for sensual pleasures. 2. *Krodha* is anger causing pain to others. 3. *Lobha* is the instinct of possession. 4. *Mōha* is delusion or mistaking one thing for another. 5. *Mada* is conceit arising from egoistic enjoyment and it causes moral confusion. 6. *Mātsarya* is envy or jealousy at other's prosperity. 7.*Dambha* is self-advertisement. 8. *Māna* is the feeling of superiority to others and insulting them. 9. *Pāruṣya* is conduct leading to other's displeasure. 10. *Ajñāna* is ignorance of what is good and what is bad. 11. *Ahaṅkāra* is egoism expressed in terms of self-elation and the feeling of superiority to others. It includes identification with the body. 12- *Mamakāra* is

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also, even the birds and insects derive support from him. So a *Gṛhastha* is the mainstay of the society and his *āśrama* is the most humanitarian and therefore the best of the *āśramas*.

Pañca-yajñas are thus based on the idea of life as an opportunity for service and self-sacrifice and not for sense-enjoyment. It is giving back to the universe what a man has taken from it for self-maintenance.

The next is the *vānaprasthāśrama*. When a man reaches old age and is subject to dotage and is blessed with a grandson, he should leave the *gṛhasthāśrama* and retire to the forest either with or without his wife, after transferring the management of the family to his son and spend his life in contemplation. Retirement to the forest is only for inner spiritual quiet. His food consists of roots, fruits and similar forest products. He practises ascetic self-control by fasts and enduring sufferings. He should also perform the five *mahāyajñas*. This *āśrama* is only a training period for the next or *sannyāsāśrama* or the life of renunciation and contemplation.

The *Sannyāsin* gives up all sense attractions and attachments and even the celestial pleasures of *Svarga*. Though he lives in solitude he may enter the city and seek alms for the sustenance of his body. He has no attachments or aversions.

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Her life of love is enriched by the advent motherhood. Her instinct of self-sacrifice a service are fully brought out in the bearing a rearing of the children, worthy of the *gotra* a the spiritual tradition. It is motherhood that elic the infinite spirit of self-denial and affection solicitude and is manifested in the fostering of t child by endless privations and patience borderi on martyrdom. The forgiving nature of the moth increases with the prodigalities of the children ev if they happen to be prodigal.

Wifehood is, therefore, extolled in Hinduism the symbol and embodiment of Divine Love. T *Īśvara-Īśvarī* relation of Godhood is a dual-no dual relation of *Pārvatī-Parameśvara* or *Śriyaḥpa* *Īśvara* rules by law and *Īśvarī* by love and the t are glued together as one. It is Divine Motherho that is the operative grace of God which consists forgiveness and the redemption of the sinner fr his ways of wickedness. The mother's love spontaneous and the Divine Mother forgives sins Her overflowing love.

The love shown by the *pati* to the *patnī* is t real property of the woman and it is richer a more enduring than earthly property and mater welfare. The work of the woman is not confined the fostering of domestic felicity as she often tal a leading part in social service like feeding the po healing the sick and rearing children and rejoici in devotional activities. But her feminine nature essentially suited to the founding of the home a her fundamental right is the right of love whi rules the home and society.

CHAPTER VIII

WORSHIP

Ardent *bhakti* cannot rest satisfied with silent meditation and *upāsanā*, especially when it overflows and expresses itself in the form of tears, tremors and trance and as bridal mysticism. Vedic offerings to gods are reinterpreted as Vedāntic offerings to Brahman. Brahman is beyond space and time and is formless. But He has a formless form of His own to respond to the needs of the worshippers and their prayers and praise. Though *bhakti* is for *bhakti's* sake, the worshippers often pray for earthly and celestial boons and *Bhagavān*, as Providence, answers their prayers. Contemplation on the inner self is supremely desirable but it is not what is actually possible for the average man of common-sense. He wants something concrete to fix his mind upon. In His infinite mercy and love, God descends into humanity as *arca* or idol. *Arca* is not metal or stone symbol but is the permanent incarnation of God and the concretion of His *kṛpā*. In *arca* God is easily accessible to all at any time or in any place. God-hunger for man is more than man's hunger for God and as *arca*, He longs for

communion with the devotee whom He regards as His very *ātman* or self. *Bhakti* and worship or *pūja* are the inner and the outer expressions of man's love of God. In His infinite love, He comes down and the mystic ascends to Him by *Karma Yoga*, *Jñāna Yoga* and *Bhakti Yoga*. *Arca* is the most accessible form of God for expressing our love through *pūja* or worship.

Worship can be offered in a variety of ways. We can worship Him by inner meditation or *dhyāna*. We can again worship Him by offering flowers, incense, food and drink. We can also worship Him by simply uttering His names. The first method is difficult to practise as it implies the turning of the vision inward. The second is easy and lies within the reach of all people. The third is the easiest and the most efficacious of all. The worship of the idol or *arca* is really the worship of the living all-pervading presence of the Lord. The Deity responds to our *bhakti* and out of His grace, reveals His nature in and as *arca*. While *avatāras* are historic incarnations of God that come and go, *arca* is the permanent incarnation of God and He is ever accessible to the mystic. God comes to stay in the idol out of His grace and by virtue of our devotion and prayer.

There are two primary methods in the worship of God as Nārāyaṇa, namely, the *Pāñca-*

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Worship can be offered in a variety of ways. We can worship Him by inner meditation or *dhyāna*. We can again worship Him by offering flowers, incense, food and drink. We can also worship Him by simply uttering His names. The first method is difficult to practise as it implies the turning of the vision inward. The second is easy and lies within the reach of all people. The third is the easiest and the most efficacious of all. The worship of the idol or *arca* is really the worship of the living all-pervading presence of the Lord. The Deity responds to our *bhakti* and out of His grace, reveals His nature in and as *arca*. While *avatāras* are historic incarnations of God that come and go, *arca* is the permanent incarnation of God and He is ever accessible to the mystic. God comes to stay in the idol out of His grace and by virtue of our devotion and prayer.

There are two primary methods in the worship of God as Nārāyaṇa, namely, the *Pāñca-*

in a ladder and every sect or system has its own way of attainment. There is another view that each yoga is independent and leads directly to *mukti*. In this work, the view of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism is adopted and *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* are treated as different stages in the pilgrimage to God. The will is first disciplined, then thought and finally feeling as *bhakti* is stressed. *Prapatti* is the easiest way to God as He Himself becomes the way and the end and *mukti* is thus attained by the grace of God.

Karma yoga is a moral discipline by purifying the will. Its object is to change *kāmya karma* into *niṣkāma karma* or duty for duty's sake. No man can be without doing *karma* and *karma* includes thought, speech and overt action. Every man as a bodily self ordinarily follows his animal inclination or desire for sense-objects. He not only seeks sense-pleasures but also desires some outside ends like success (*jaya*), profit (*lābha*) and name and fame. These are called *kāmya karmas* because they are based on the desire of the person for sense-objects and sense-pleasures. Such ends are not desirable morally as they make the person the slave of sensibility. Besides, *kāma* leads to *krodha* or anger when the desire is not achieved; anger leads to confusion and moral death. Therefore, the *Gītā* prescribes the way of

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prapatti is for all irrespective of caste, creed, sex or profession and is therefore universal. The chief *mantra* for *prapatti* is *dvaya* which means refuge at the feet of Lord and Śrī. The classic example of *prapatti* is that of Nammāḻvār, the super-*prapanna* of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism who surrendered himself to the mercy of Śrīnivāsa with Śrī as His heart, and was blessed with *mukti.* All sects in India are, as it were, pilgrims to the Divine *dayā* in the holy Hill of Tirumalai. The Hill is sacred to the followers of Madhva who insist on service to Viṣṇu as the chief means and end of religion.

The Śaivite defines Śiva, his supreme God, as Love and refers to four ways, *cariya*, *kriya*, *yoga* and *jñāna* as means to the attainment of Śiva. They correspond to the four *yogas* of Vedānta. Even the followers of Śaṅkara accept the existence of a Personal God for all practical purposes and the need for His grace. Thus all Hindus have faith in Brahman as personal God and seek with the aid of a *guru* His mercy to attain *mokṣa* or *sayujya* which is outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X

PURUSARTHAS : MUKTI

Every animal pursues an end but man alone is conscious of the end. Man has reason or *viveka* and he is also morally free and a *kartā*. His consciousness of the end or purpose is called *puruṣārtha* ; it is his aim of life or goal. Man's physical needs are food, water, fire, air and clothing, *i.e.*, they are for the preservation of his body. He seeks pleasures and their continuance and avoids pains. Hinduism has analysed all the chief ends of life and classified them into four broad kinds. They are called *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. They may be rendered in English as the ethical, the economic, the hedonistic or pleasure-seeking and the religious ends of life. They are not, however, exclusive. They all lead to the super-end of life, namely, *mokṣa*.

Dharma or righteousness is the ethical end of life. Hinduism gives the practice of *dharma* the first place among the *puruṣārthas* as no man can take a moral holiday. Right conduct is the whole of life and the other ends of life should also be righteous. Buddhism and Jainism also insist on the need for the practice of *dharma*. But they do not recognise and realise that good-

ness has its final meaning only in godliness. God is good by nature and the highest good is godliness, to be attained through the *Śāstra*. So morality or *dharma* has its full meaning in religion or *Śāstra* which prescribes the duties that ought to be done. They are called *vidhis*. They are righteousness in practised acts. *Dharma* is righteousness in action and is the essence of duty and it consists in reverence to parents, teachers and sages; truthfulness, charity, courage and kindliness to all creatures. It includes the performance of the five *yajñas* or sacrifices to the *devas* and *pitṛs* above, to men and lower animals. It brings out the solidarity of the universe and the need for mutual helpfulness. The violation of these duties is *adharma* and entails sin or *pāpa*. *Adharma* includes evil and sin; it is evil in the moral sense and sin in the religious sense as it is the violation of a Divine Law. By doing the acts of *dharma*, the general attitude of *dharma* or righteousness is attained. A man then becomes a *dharmavān* like Dharmaputra and is like Rāma, the very incarnation of righteousness on earth. Śrī Rāma practised truthfulness (*satya*), devotion to vows, kindliness to all creatures and self-control. He subordinated *artha* and *kāma* to the discipline of *dharma*. *Dharma* is thus the very essence of duty for duty's sake.

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they are trivial and transcient. Therefore a wise man should renounce these pleasures and seek eternal happiness which is only in *mokṣa.*

Kaiṅkarya or social and spiritual service to all *jīvas* is work raised to the level of worship of God. The great devotees of God like the Āḻvārs and the Ācāryas sought God in all beings and all beings in God and raised the idea of service to the level of *kaiṅkarya.* Self-surrender to God is the highest *puruṣārtha* or supreme end of conduct. God is the fulfilment of all the *puruṣārthas*, as He is *sarvakāma* or all-desire and *sarvaśaraṇya*, the refuge of all.

The *mumukṣu* who seeks *mukti* by following *sādhanas* or yogas at last attains it. The term *mokṣa* means freedom from *saṁsara* or the ills of life due to *avidyā* and *karma.* It is freedom from the cycle of births and deaths to which the embodied *jīva*, or *baddha* as he is called, is subject. The word *mukti* is negative as it means that there is no return to this world of *saṁsāra.* But it has also a positive meaning as it refers to the ascent of the freed *jīva* to the world of Brahman beyond space and time. *Mokṣa* is the attainment of Brahman by knowing whom everything is known. According to Rāmānuja, following the *Upaniṣads*, the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā*, the *mukta*, freed from the

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make the other bound *jīvas muktas.* On whole it is impossible to describe the bliss Vaikuṇṭha. He who experiences it alone explain it. The followers of Madhva sepa good from evil and assert that the good or devotee of Viṣṇu goes to Vaikuṇṭha serves Him there for ever and that the wic is hurled into everlasting Hell. The Śai has faith in Śiva as the supreme good and following the saint's path, he attains, a death, the world of Śiva or Kailāsa. Advaitin says that *mukti* is possible even in life and it is *jīvanmukti* or identity of *jīva* *Īśvara.* He, however, admits gradual release ascending to the world of Viṣṇu.

All Hindus have faith in the four yogas freedom from *saṁsāra* with the grace of God.

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past vital life of man. In Hinduism it is sought in full conformity with the triple principles of liberty, law and love. That it has not been successful in Hinduism in a larger measure than we would like it to be only shows that generally there has been a stepping down of the ideals of religion everywhere. Religions become rigid and tend to repeat the mistakes of passion and greed of the lower levels on the higher levels of social and spiritual action and thus step down the force of the true impulse.

Hinduism unlike other religions which took up the competitive path, has sought to tame even the enthusiasm of the knowers of other religions by its wide catholicity in spirit to the truths expounded by them. It has disarmed them all, both within India and without by means of its peaceful approach. The twin-notes of Hinduism, struck not once only in the history of India, are peace *(Śānti)* and knowledge *(jñāna)*, peace through knowledge and knowledge through peace. A social life which is based on these two principles or ideals, would tend to exhibit a higher state of civilisedness and culture than one based on comfort or security or even salvation.

The individual must be re-made in the spiritual manner. This requires on the part of every individual the recognition of the world as

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the full sense of the term is a political society with its State and other organisations which ensure freedom for the members and rights of each. In modern times the State has taken over the organisations which have to cater to the needs of the members. Socialisation and Nationalisation of the organisations which have previously been run by individuals is not a little due to the awakening of men to their social and spiritual needs of liberty and rights and duties. This awakening is really due to the religious teachings of great men, who had taught reverence for life and rights of each member. It is religion in India that taught the triple truths of liberty of the individual as a goal, of law which is administered equally, that is, in the interests of the poor and the rich alike, the high and the low, and love for all, love which is expressed by acts of kindness and protection, in times of disease and distress, famine and drought.

The grand truths of religions alone inspired the great work of social amelioration of the conditions of life. The social dynamics of modern States is inspired, whether in a materialistic or socialistic State, by the spiritual principles of *dharma*, *mokṣa* and *kāma*, law, liberty and love, and *karuṇa* or sympathy. The practical idealism of religion in Hinduism would extend

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the long run to break up the State itself. The State or even Society cannot become God or the sole object of loyalty because it cannot satisfy the deepest impulse of the soul for the knowledge of itself completely. Real *mokṣa* is sought after and it means not liberty for getting goods and satisfactions or the liberty before the eye of law and right to equal opportunity but the liberty to be freed from the cycle of births and deaths, and the terror of constant birth and death.

Religion supplies this and it alone can supply this. Spiritual pain is verily different from all other kinds of pain and fear. It cannot be assuaged by any offer of worldly wealth, or divine pleasures of even the rigid life of *dharma*. Great men have thrown away empires for the sake of freedom from all these. The *artha* and *kāma puruṣārthas* are *tuccha*. A world dominated by them is a delusion, a snare. Man should seek to get out of them, free himself from them. But such a freedom is difficult without the opening of the soul to real light. Teachers of religion know how to help these men. The preservation of religious texts and institutions facilitates the seeker of liberation on his path. Inner illumination or desire needs the support of the religious literature and methods. The company of the good or knowers of the path of inner discovery

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CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

Hinduism is a universal religion because it affirms the existence of God as not only God beyond the world but as the inner Love in all *jīvas*. Every one can seek Him and see Him face to face. The great Ṛṣis, Āḻvārs and Nāyanmārs sought God and saw Him face to face. The existence of God is proved by the experience of God. *Śāstra* is not opposed to science as its method of knowing God is scientific and it can be verified by personal experience. God is *satya* and *amala*, true and pure. Therefore, only the pure in heart who follow the *sāttvik* way can reach Him. Since the end is pure, the means also must be pure. Hinduism, therefore, insists on purity of conduct in thought, word and deed as the essential requisites for religious life. It is more a personal religion aiming at inner purity of life than on institutional loyalty and uniformity of faith.

No two persons are alike in temperament or station in life. Hinduism provides for every kind of *adhikārin* or aspirant and he is allowed to choose the path that is suited to his spiritual growth. A man may worship God in whatever form; He reveals Himself to him in that form. But he should seek Him with a pure heart.

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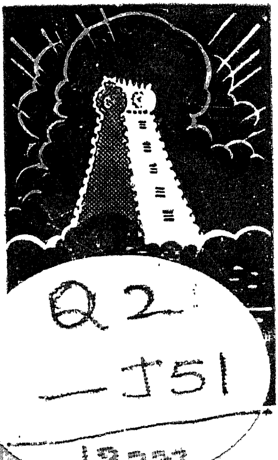
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HANDBOO

OF

HINDU

RELIGIO



TIRUMALAI - TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

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ERRATA

Line	*Incorrect*	*Correct*
7	that *Avatāra*	that of *Avatāra*
15	own	his own
21	the ir	their
18	mightly	mighty
16	of three	of the three
10	himself	him
11	all	some of
17	*pañch-yajñas*	*pañcayajñas*
3	*rājasic*	*rājasaic*
„	*tāmasic*	*tāmasaic*
4	individual	individuals
17	*svarājya*	*svārājya*